

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 12. Cancelled.

13. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;
- c. a belt positioned adjacent the drum, wherein the belt bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum to temporarily close the at least one mold cavity;
- d. a film-feed means for feeding a disposable film between the belt and the first surface of the drum so as to substantially prevent contact between mass in the at least one mold cavity and the belt; and
- e. a film-uptake means for removing the film from between the belt and the first surface of the drum at a point along the path upstream of discharge of the mass from the at least one mold cavity.

14. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;

b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;

c. a belt positioned adjacent the drum, wherein the belt bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum to temporarily close the at least one mold cavity; and

d. belt pressure means to exert pressure directed substantially toward the drum on at least a portion of the belt that bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum, wherein the belt pressure means comprises controllable air pressure.

15. – 20. Cancelled.

21. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;

b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;

c. first film-feed means comprising a supply reel of plastic film for placing the plastic film to cover the walls of the at least one mold cavity before mass is fed into the cavity;

d. closure means for temporarily closing the cavity opening on the first surface of the drum;

e. a connecting passage connecting the at least one mold cavity and the second surface of the drum; and

f. pressure medium feed means arranged along the second surface of the drum for feeding a gaseous or liquid pressure medium into the connecting passage to generate a fixing pressure in the mass when enclosed in the mold cavity by the closure means.

22. – 39. Cancelled.

40. (Previously Presented) The molding device of claim 13, wherein the film-uptake means comprises means for winding the film onto a reel.

41. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;
- c. a belt positioned adjacent the drum, wherein the belt bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum to temporarily close the at least one mold cavity; and
- d. belt pressure means to exert pressure directed substantially toward the drum on at least a portion of the belt that bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum, wherein the belt pressure means comprises controllable liquid pressure.

42. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;
- c. a belt positioned adjacent the drum, wherein the belt bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum to temporarily close the at least one mold cavity; and
- d. belt pressure means to exert pressure directed substantially toward the drum on at least a portion of the belt that bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum, wherein the belt pressure means comprises a chamber at least partially defined by the belt and a source of pressurized medium in communication with the chamber.

43. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;
- c. a belt positioned adjacent the drum, wherein a first side of the belt bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum to temporarily close the at least one mold cavity; and
- d. belt pressure means to exert pressure directed substantially toward the drum on at least a portion of the belt that bears against at least a portion of the first surface of the drum, wherein the belt pressure means comprises a tray placed against a second side of the belt and a source of pressurized medium in communication with the tray.

44.– 48. Cancelled.

49. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity;
- c. a pumping device coupled to the mass-feed component to feed the mass to the mass-feed component, wherein the pumping device comprise a regulator to regulate the filling pressure of the mass;
- d. closure means for temporarily closing the cavity opening on the first surface of the drum;

- e. a connecting passage connecting the at least one mold cavity and the second surface of the drum; and
- f. pressure medium feed means arranged along the second surface of the drum for feeding a gaseous or liquid pressure medium into the connecting passage to generate a fixing pressure in the mass enclosed in the mold cavity by the closure means.

50. (Previously Presented) A molding device for molding three-dimensional products from a mass of foodstuff which is suitable for human consumption, comprising:

- a. a drum having a first surface, a second surface, and moving along a path and comprising at least one mold cavity defined by mold walls and having a cavity opening positioned along the first surface of the drum;
- b. a mass-feed component positioned adjacent the drum for feeding mass into the at least one mold cavity at a filling pressure;
- c. an extruder comprising an extruder tube and an associated extruder screw rotatable in the extruder tube, wherein the extruder is adapted to feed mass to the mass-feed component in such a manner that the filling pressure of the mass is regulated;
- d. closure means for temporarily closing the cavity opening on the first surface of the drum;
- e. a connecting passage connecting the at least one mold cavity and the second surface of the drum; and
- f. pressure medium feed means arranged along the second surface of the drum for feeding a gaseous or liquid pressure medium into the connecting passage to generate a fixing pressure in the mass enclosed in the mold cavity by the closure means.